

# ADDRESSING VIOLENCE AMONGST AFRICAN AMERICANS THROUGH GANG PREVENTION & INTERVENTION SERVICES

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# Nihilism in Black America

- *“...we must delve into the depths...namely, into the murky waters of despair and dread that now flood the streets of black America. To talk about the depressing statistics of unemployment, infant mortality, incarceration, teenage pregnancy, and violent crime is one thing. But to face up to the monumental eclipse of hope, the unprecedented collapse of meaning, the incredible disregard for human (especially black) life and property in much of black America is something else”. (Cornell West, Race Matters, 1994, p. 19)*

# GANG REDUCTION YOUTH DEVELOPMENT (GRYD)

- *Most Recent L.A. Gang Program*
- *Comprehensive Approach*
- *Prevention, Intervention, Suppression*
- *Not explicitly culturally oriented, but culturally enacted agency by agency*



# EMPIRICALLY BASED RISK FACTOR APPROACH TO PREVENTION

- 1. *Antisocial Tendencies*
- 2. *Weak Parental Supervision*
- 3. *Critical Life Events*
- 4. *Impulsive Risk Taking*
- 5. *Guilt Neutralization*
- 6. *Negative Peer Influence*
- 7. *Peer Delinquency*
- 8. *Family Gang Influence*
- 9. *Self-Reported Delinquency & Substance Use*

# INCORPORATING FAMILY ORIENTATION & ASSET BUILDING

- *Strengthen and Expand Family Bonds*
- *Genograms are Foundational*  
*(Bowen Family Systems, Promotes Individuation)*
- *Identify Internal and External Assets*  
*(40 Developmental Assets, Search Institute, 2006)*

# COMMUNITY BUILD PREVENTION OUTCOMES

<i>*Must have 4 Risk Factors to Qualify for Program</i>	INITIAL YSET	RETEST <sub>1</sub>	RETEST <sub>2</sub>
Number of Participants	261	128	64
Average Number of Risk Factors	5.81	2.28	2.14
Number of Participants Improved Below 4 RF Threshold	N/A	89 (69.5%)	49 (76.5%)

# APPROACH TO INTERVENTION

- *Multi-disciplinary staff including*
  - *Community Intervention Workers*
  - *Case Managers*
  - *Substance Abuse Prevention Counselor*
  - *Psychological Counselors (not typical in most programs)*
- *Weekly Case Conferences*



# INTERVENTION SELECTION CRITERIA

- *Openly admits gang involvement*
- *Family has strong history of gang involvement*
- *Majority of known associates are gang involved/taggers/crew members*
- *On gang injunction*
- *Demonstrates commitment to known gang members*
  - *Exhibits signs of affiliation via attire, tagger crew, speech*
  - *Will readily back-up gang associate in conflict with person not affiliated with the gang*



# INTERVENTION PROCESS

- *Program Recruitment, mostly by CIW's*
- *Comprehensive Intake*
- *Establishing ID*
- *Employment counseling and referrals*
- *Paid Internships*
- *Liaison with Schools, Probation, GR, Mental Health*
- *Substance Abuse Prevention Group*
- *Psychological Counseling*
- *Family Nights*

# INTERVENTION TARGET OUTCOMES

- *Get or Remain Productively Engaged in:*
  - *Work*
  - *School*
  - *GED Prep*
  - *Employment Training*
- *Get Off Parole or Probation*
- *Avoid Crime*

# INTERVENTION OUTCOMES

- *Outcome Measure not as evolved, empirically based, or accepted as YSET*
- *6% Employed at Intake, 40% Employed at some time during program*
- *52% in School at Intake, 74% in School at some time during program*
- *63% of Completers rated as “Graduates”*
- *We’ve lost about 10% to incarceration*
- *We’ve lost about 4% to homicide*
- *We have a pesky 48% drop out rate*



# IN SEARCH OF THE TRANSFORMATIVE, REDEMPTIVE EXPERIENCE

- *Work and School are necessary, but only sometimes sufficient*
- *Timely intervention when readiness for change is heightened – birth of child, experience or witness violence, release from incarceration*
- *The Paulo Freire Solution*
- *Building of “family” connections and commitments*
- *Genogram supported reflection on family history*
- *Spiritual enlightenment and engagement with religious institutions*
- *Contending with Cultural Phantoms*
- *Awakening*